

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-14

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CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

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TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

USDEL JEC PARIS

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY MANILA

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TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT: APRIL 3 INDOCHINA PRESS SUMMARY

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1. NYT, WP AND SUN REPORT MANHARD PRESS CONFERENCE IN
DEPARTMENT, HIGHLIGHTING -- DESPITE HIS OWN SUFFERING --

HIS COMPASSIONATE COMMENTS ON VIET PEOPLES' NEED FOR US ASSISTANCE. GWERTZMAN (NYT) CONTRASTS THIS WITH STRONG ANTI- AID VIEWS OF CONGRESSMEN AND APPARENT LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR AID BY OTHER POWS. (IN CBS " FIRST- LINE REPORT," KALB PAID MOVING TRIBUTE TO MANHARD FOR HUMANE, COMPASSIONATE AND INTELLIGENT COMMENTS AT PRESS CONFERENCE, PARTICULARLY NOTING HIS SUPPORT FOR RECONSTRUCTION AID).

2. ALL PAPERS FRONTPAGE SAN CLEMENTE SUMMIT MEETING. WH OFFICIALS INDICATE PRESIDENT PROMISED SVN RECONSTRUCTION AID, BUT RESISTED REQUEST FOR SPECIFIC GUARANTEES OF RENEWED MILITARY INTERVENTION IF HANOI BLATANTLY VIOLATES C- F. THIEU EXPRESSED " HEARTFELT THANKS" FOR US ASSISTANCE TO DATE. ZIEGLER SAYS TWO MEN DISCUSSED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, EFFORTS TO ACCOUNT FOR MIA, INFILTRATION AND NVA PRESENCE IN LAOS AND CAMBODIA. DECLINES SPECULATE ABOUT US ACTIONS IN EVENT MAJOR HANOI C- F VIOLATION. PRESIDENT SAID PREPARED TO REPEAT HIS WARNING TO HANOI, BUT DOESN' T WANT MAKE ANY SPECIFIC GUARANTEE OF US INTERVENTION TO THIEU (AP, NYT).

3. WP' S KIRKPATRICK REPORTS PRESIDENT " POINTEDLY" NOTED IN WELCOMING REMARKS THAT RVN NOW HAS STRENGTH TO DEFEND ITSELF, WHILE THIEU OBSERVES THAT ALTHOUGH ALL US TROOPS NOW GONE FROM SVN, OVER 300,000 STILL REMAIN IN EUROPE OVER QUARTER OF CENTURY AFTER WW II. SUN' S CLYMER REPORTS THIEU' S REMARK DIFFERENTLY, SAYING THIEU SAYS HE " PROUD" THAT, WHILE US FORCES STILL NEEDED IN EUROPE, RVNAF WAS ABLE " REPEL ALL- OUT COMMUNIST INVASION LAST YEAR" WITHOUT US GROUND FORCES. KISSINGER AND COUNTERPART, NGUYEN PHU DUC, PARTICIPATE IN NIXON- THIEU TALKS. BUNKER, MARTIN, PORTER PARTICIPATE IN ROGERS- LAM TALKS. CSM' S SHELDON SAYS WHAT THIEU WANTS MOST IS ASSURANCE OF CONTINUING US ECONOMIC AID FLOW, AS TESTIFIED BY PRESENCE IN ENTOURAGE OF LEADING GVN ECON- FINANCE OFFICIALS. THIEU ALSO BELIEVED TO WANT DERIVE POLITICAL BENEFITS IN SVN FROM HIS HIGH- LEVEL TALKS WITH PRESIDENT.

4. NYT' S FOX REPORTS, FROM SAIGON, GVN BOYCOTT OF UNCLASSIFIED

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TPJMC OVER BESIEGED RANGER OUTPOST AT TONG LE CHAN THREATENS EXISTENCE OF FIVE- DAY- OLD SUCCESSOR TO FPJMC. GVN HINTS IT READY TO TAKE MAJOR MILITARY ACTION TO RELIEVE CAMP, SAYING COMMUNISTS HAVE ASSAULTED IT 21 TIMES SINCE FEBRUARY 26 AND KEPT IT UNDER ALMOST CONTINUOUS ARTILLERY FIRE. COMMUNISTS SAY PROBLEM STARTED WHEN ARVN BEGAN " NIBBLING" OPERATIONS AROUND OUTPOST. GVN HAS REQUESTED ICCS ACTION, BUT POLAND AND HUNGARY REPORTEDLY RELUCTANT PROCEED WITHOUT SAFETY

ASSURANCES. CANADA AND INDONESIA PRESSING FOR IMMEDIATE CHECK. VC SAYS IT HAS PROPOSED BATTLEFIELD MEETING BETWEEN OPPOSING COMMANDERS, BUT GVN REFUSES AND FIGHTING CONTINUES SO ASKS, " HOW CAN ICCS COME TO TONG LE CHAN?" (ALSO WP).

5. NYT' S TELTSCH REPORTS THAT UN OFFICIALS SAY THEY CAUGHT BY SURPRISE BY VC APPOINTMENT OF UN REP. WALDHEIM SAID TO HAVE MADAME BINH' S PROPOSAL UNDER STUDY. DEP. USUN REP. PHILLIPS SAYS US UNDER NO OBLIGATION TO ISSUE VISA TO VC REP. US DOES NOT REGARD BINH PROPOSAL AS HAVING ORIGINATED WITH A GOVERNMENT. PHILLIPS SAYS FACT US SIGNED PARIS ACCORD DOESN' T MEAN IT RECOGNIZED PRG AS GOVERNMENT BUT ONLY AS PARTY TO CONFLICT AND THIS DISCLAIMER COVERED BY ACCORD ITSELF. PRG MOVE SEEN BY USUN OFFICIAL AS EFFORT TO " MUDDY THE WATERS" AT SAN CLEMENTE (NYT).

6. AMERICAN CONTRACT EMPLOYEE IN SAIGON PULLS PISTOL ON ROBBER WHO HAS BEEN ROBBING EMBASSY EMPLOYEES AND TAKES HIM TO POLICE STATION. THIEF HAD ROBBED AMBASSADOR' S SECRETARY, EVA KIM, AND TRIED HOLD UP

SENIOR EMBASSY OFFICER WHO " SIMPLY WALKED AWAY." DESPITE EARLIER FEARS, NO RISE IN CRIMES AGAINST AMERICANS SINCE US TROOP WITHDRAWAL (NYT).

7. CHIEF MEDIC CLARK AFB " REFUSES" DISCLOSE MEDICAL EVIDENCE SUPPORTING POW TORTURE CLAIMS. DECLINES SAY WHETHER MEN SHOW MARKS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE OR MENTAL UNBALANCE, SAYING INFORMATION NOT YET ASSIMILATED AND WILL BE HANDLED BY DOD AT " APPROPRIATE TIME" (WP).

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8. MUSKIE, IN DEM REPLY OVER PUBLIC RADIO NETWORK TO PRESIDENT' S NATIONAL TV BROADCAST ON END OF TROOP WITHDRAWAL, CHARGES CAMBODIA BOMBING " DOES NOT HAVE THE APPROVAL OF THE CONGRESS, NOR HAS THAT APPROVAL BEEN SOUGHT BY THE PRESIDENT" (SUN).

9. US SAIGON SPOKESMAN SAYS 4- PARTY TEAM WILL HOLD FIRST MEETING TODAY ON ARRANGEMENTS TO RECOVER REMAINS OF US DEAD. DRV SAID TO KNOW EXACTLY WHERE AIRMEN BURIED, TO HAVE GIVEN US NAMES OF 55 MEN WHO DIED IN CAPTIVITY, AND PROMISED " COMPLETE COOPERATION" (SUN).

10. GVN TO INTEGRATE 238 COMMUNIST POW DEFECTORS (90 PER CEN) NVN INTO SVN SOCIETY (PHINQ).

11. DOD SOURCES TELL SUN' S CORDDRY MOST BOMBING BEING

DIRECTED AGAINST OLD NVA SUPPLY ROUTES AND BORDER BASES IN EASTERN CAMBODIA STILL USED FOR INFILTRATION INTO SVN. WHILE SOME US AIR STRIKES HAVE SUPPORTED FANK, EFFORT DESIGNED MOSTLY TO PROTECT RVN. HUGE STEP- UP IN B-52 STRIKES SINCE MID- MARCH COINCIDES WITH LARGE INFILTRATION INTO SVN. B-52 S FLEW ONLY 60 SORTIES OVER CAMBODIA DURING THREE DAY PERIOD NEAR END FEBRUARY; NOW B-52 S RUNNING 58 SORTIES PER DAY. STATE SPOKESMAN KING SAYS CAMBODIA NOT " ALLY" IN FORMAL SENSE AS CONSEQUENCE OF TREATY OR ALLIANCE RELATIONSHIP, BUT TWO COUNTRIES " ALLIED" IN SENSE THEY HAVE BEEN " FIGHTING A COMMON ENEMY FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS" (NYT, WP).

12. PEOPLE' S DAILY EDITORIAL EXPRESSES CHINA' S FIRM SUPPORT FOR " SOLEMN STAND" OF NVN AND VC STATEMENTS LAST WEEK CALLING FOR COMPLETE IMPLEMENTATION OF PARIS AGREEMENT. ACCUSES U. S. AND SVN OF OBSTRUCTING THOROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREEMENT, CHARGING U. S. SPECIFICALLY WITH DELAYED REMOVAL OF MINES AND CONTINUED BOMBING OF CAMBODIA (REUTER).

13. WP REFERS TO RICHARDSON' S ASSERTION THAT " IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT" FOR LON NOL GOVERNMENT TO SURVIVE WITHOUT MASSIVE US AIR SUPPORT. SAYS ISSUE IS NOT SURVIVAL, BUT WHETHER REGIME IS SUFFICIENTLY UNCLASSIFIED

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VITAL TO US INTERESTS TO JUSTIFY PROLONGING WAR FROM WHICH US HAS PRESUMABLY DISENGAGED AND FOR REPUDIATING AT THIS CRITICAL STAGE OF DISENGAGEMENT SENSIBLE SELF-HELP POLICY OF NIXON DOCTRINE. RICHARDSON SIDESTEPED VITAL ISSUE OF CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY BY REFERRING TO CAMBODIA BOMBING AS WINDUP OF CONFLICT. ADMINISTRATION SEEMS LAYING BASIS FOR REPETITION OF VN TRAGEDY IN CAMBODIA, IF NOT FOR RESUMPTION OF MILITARY INTERVENTION IN VN ITSELF. CONGRESS HAS CONSTITUTIONAL OBLIGATION TO CHALLENGE SUCH EXTENSION OF PRESIDENTIAL WAR- MAKING AUTHORITY.

14. SUN REVIEWS RATIONALE USED BY KENNEDY AND JOHNSON FOR ENTANGLEMENT IN INDOCHINA. WITH RESPECT TO NIXON, THERE IS CERTAIN LOGIC TO RICHARDSOM' S OUTLINE OF ADMINISTRATION CASE FOR BOMBING, PROVIDED ONE ACCEPTS NIXON' S GGANDIOSE NOTIONS ABOUT EXECUTIVE POWERS. BUT IT SHOULD BE SOURCE OF DEEP CONCERN TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE CONGRESS' PREROGATIVE TO DECLARE WAR WAS DESIGNED AS CHECK AGAINST ALL- POWERFUL COMMANDER- IN- CHIEF.

15. CSM SPECULATES THAT SIHANOUK, TO WHOM WASHINGTON IS NOT ADAMANTLY OPPOSED, WILL END UP ONCE MORE IN PP PALACE AND THAT PURPOSE OF BOMBING CAMBODIA IS TO

INFLUENCE COMPROMISE ARRANGEMENT WHEREBY THOSE WHO SUPPORTED LON NOL REGIME WILL HAVE SHARE IN CAMBODIA'S FUTURE. CSM APPROVES PURPOSE, DOUBTS MEANS TO ACHIEVE PURPOSE, BUT FEELS THAT AT THIS STAGE IT MUST BE LEFT TO PRESIDENT AND HAK TO DO WHAT THEY THINK DESIRABLE. COUNSELS WH TAKE SENATE MORE FULLY INTO ITS CONFIDENCE IN FOREIGN POLICIES.

16. KRAFT (GLOBE, APRIL 2) NOTING INDICATIONS OF BREAK-DOWN IN INDOCHINA PEACE, SAYS TASK OF BUILDING BARRIER AGAINST REENTRY TO WAR DEVOLVES ON SFRC. THERE ARE COUPLE OF GOOD HANDLES FOR SENATE ACTION. FIRST, MATTER OF CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY FOR FURTHER USE OF FORCE IN INDOCHINA NOW THAT PRISONERS ARE HOME AND US FORCES OUT. SENATOR MATHIAS EXPRESSED WIDELY HELD VIEW WHEN HE DECLARED THERE IS " NO AUTHORITY IN CONSTITUTION OR IN STATUTE" FOR BOMBING CAMBODIA. BUT LESSON NEEDS BE DRIVEN HOME AND APPLIED TO VN IN PUBLIC HEARINGS.
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SECOND, ADMINISTRATION HAS DONE NOTHING TO USE DIPLOMATIC ALTERNATIVE TO UNILATERAL MILITARY ACTION:
12- POWER CONFERENCE SET UP TO GUARANTEE C- F. THAT -

AND IN PARTICULAR STANCE OF NIXON'S FRIENDS IN PEKING AND MOSCOW - ALSO NEEDS BE DRIVEN HOME.

17. PHINQ SAYS IF, AS REPORTED, THIEU IS SEEKING US PLEDGE TO UNDERWRITE SURVIVAL OF NON- COMMUNIST SVN AND INTERVENE WITH AIR POWER AGAIN IN CASE OF FULL-SCALE NVN OFFENSIVE, HE SHOULD BE DISABUSED OF ANY SUCH NOTION. IF AFTER ALL US HAS DONE, VIETNAMIZATION HAS NOT SUCCEEDED, FAULT LIES NOT WITH US BUT WITH SVN. WE ARE OUT OF WAR, AND THIEU SHOULD BE TOLD WE INTEND STAY OUT. POST EXPRESSES SIMILAR VIEWS, AND DRAWS ATTENTION TO CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS ON PRESIDENT'S AUTHORITY TO UNDERTAKE MILITARY ACTION AS HE SEES FIT TO ENFORCE SHAKY C- F AGREEMENTS.

18. CDN'S KEYES BEECH (MARCH 28) QUOTES INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AS SAYING NVN TROOPS PREPARING MAJOR ATTACK ON RLG POSITIONS ON PDJ FRINGES. COMMUNIST FORCES EVIDENTLY INTEND DRIVE MEOS OUT OF THEIR HILLTOP ENCLAVES SURROUNDING PLAIN. ACCORDING TO PEACE AGREEMENT, NEW LAO GOVERNMENT WAS TO HAVE BEEN COMPLETED BY MARCH 22; NOTHING HAPPENED BECAUSE PL REFUSED SEND NEGOTIATORS BACK TO VIENTIANE, REPORTEDLY FOR FEAR OF BEING ASSASSINATED BY RIGHTIST GENERALS. RUMORS OF COUP TO OVERTHROW SOUVANNA ARE DISCOUNTED BY WESTERN OBSERVERS. ONE US OFFICIAL SAYS: " SOME OF THE GENERALS ARE TOO DUMB TO UNDERSTAND IT, BUT SOUVANNA AS HEAD OF A

COALITION GOVERNMENT IS THEIR ONLY SALVATION. IF THEY TRY A COUP, WE' LL NOT ONLY CUT OFF THE GASOLINE FOR THEIR JEEPS BUT FOR THEIR MERCEDES- BENZES AS WELL. THAT WOULD REALLY HIT THEM WHERE IT HURTS."

19. STAR- NEWS SAYS STORY OF ORGANIZED BRUTALITY AGAINST POWS FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES IS ONE THAT WILL SURPRISE ONLY THOSE WHO HAVE ALWAYS MAINTAINED THAT ENEMIES ARE BUT LITTLE LOWER THAN ANGELS. NOTES AMERICANS CAPTURED BY VC AND HIGHER- RANKING FLIERS IMPRISONED IN HANOI DURING 1965-67 APPEAR TO HAVE FARED WORST.
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AFTER 1967, US PRESS UPROAR AND WH PRESSURE SEEMS TO HAVE RESULTED IN SLIGHTLY BETTER TREATMENT. TORTURE WILL NOT MAKE ANY EASIER GETTING FUNDS THROUGH CONGRESS FOR NVN REBUILDING.

20. NICK THIMMESCH LISTS NAMES OF THOSE WHOM RETURNED POWS SAY NOT ONLY HELPED PROLONG WAR BY ENCOURAGING HANOI TO BELIEVE ANTI- WAR MOVEMENT WOULD WIN OUT, BUT CAUSED PRISONERS FURTHER SUFFERING. NAMES FONDA, DR. COFFIN, CORA WEISS, RAMSEY CLARK, DELLINGER, FALK, DOWD, CHOMSKY, RICHARD BARNET, BAEZ AND JANE HART.

21. FORMER FSO JOHN TAYLOR (CSM) WRITES FEATURE ARTICLE ON SIHANOUK, WHOSE WHEREABOUTS ARE UNKNOWN AND WHO MAY BE MAKING COMEBACK BID IN CAMBODIA WITH TACIT SUPPORT OF PEKING AND HANOI. SPECULATES THAT HANOI AND PEKING SUPPORT OF SIHANOUK WOULD NOT EXTEND TO REKINDLING CAMBODIA FIGHTING. RUSH

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